

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0060

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, SO, ET

SUBJECT: SOMALIA AND OGADEN TRIBESMEN

REF: MOGADISCIO 0027

1. WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING SIAD'S CURRENT RELATIONS WITH OGADEN TRIBESMEN, INFORMATION WHICH WEAKENS SOMEWHAT OUR MORE DOGMATIC VIEW (PARA NINE REFTEL) THAT SIAD DOES NOT RPT NOT INTEND GENERAL ARMING OF OGADEN PEOPLES. SOME OGADEN TRIBESMEN ARE APPARENTLY NOW RECEIVING LIMITED ARMS.

2. WE HAVE UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT WITHIN PAST TWO WEEKS SOME 20 OR SO OGADEN LEADERS AND TRIBESMEN RETURNED FROM THREE-MONTHS VISIT TO USSR. GROUP WAS AMONG THOSE WHO WERE SENT TO SOVIET UNION LAST AUTUMN (MOGADISCIO 1322), PRESUMABLY FOR POLITICAL/MILITARY AND INSURGENCY TRAINING. INCLUDED AMONG GROUP WAS COLONEL MUSSA HASSAN SAID MOHAMED ABDULLA, WHO IS GRANDSON OF SAID MOHAMED ABDULLA, THE QTE MAD MULLAH UNQTE. COLONEL MUSSA HASSAN HAS BEEN ADC TO SIAD FOR SOME TIME AND HIS DESAPPEARANCE FROM SIAD'S IMMEDIATE ENTOURAGE LAST AUTUMN CAME AT TIME WHEN SIAD WAS SHOWING SOME ADDITIONAL NERVOUSNESS ABOUT HIS PERSONAL SECURITY SITUATION (MOGADISCIO 1551) AND HAD DISMISSED HIS AIR FORCE CHIEF.

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3. MININTERIOR EMPLOYEE HAS ALSO TOLD US THAT MINISTRY IS NOW GIVING WEAPONS ON LIMITED BASIS TO OGADEN TRIBESMEN

IN MOGADISCIO AND DIRECTING THEM TO RETURN TO THEIR TRIBAL LANDS. EMPLOYEE AID INTERIOR INITIATIVE COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN WITH SOVIET SANCTION AND THAT IT MARKS CHANGE IN SOVIET ATTITUDE REGARDING OGADEN TERRITORIES. ACCORDING MININTERIOR CIVIL SERVANT, SOVIETS HAD ATTEMPTED FOR OVER YEAR TO GAIN ADVANTAGES IN ETHIOPIA WHICH EPMG HAD RESISTED AND WAS NOW DETERMINED TO APPLY PRESSURES THROUGH OGADEN AND SOMALIA.

4. SOMALI CIVIL SERVANT SPECULATION ON SOVIET TACTICAL CHOICES SHOULD OF COURSE BE TAKEN WITH SAME DOSE OF SALTS WHITH WHICH WE TREAT THEIR STATISTICAL REVELATIONS, LIKE REPORTS NOW CIRCULATING IN MOGADISCIO THAT THERE ARE QTE 30,000 RUSSIANS UNQTE IN SOMALIA. NEVERTHELESS MININTERIOR WOULD BE PRIVY TO SDR POLICY TOWARDS OGADEN PEOPLES.

5. EGYPTIAN MILITARY ATTACHE HERE BELIEVES THAT SIAD'S TROUBLE-MAKING ALONG OGADEN FRONTIER AND IN BALE PROVINCE IS CENERIO WHICH HAS BEEN PREPARED BY SDR FOR SIAD'S CURRENT VISIT TO ADDIS, WHERE HE WILL SEEK OPPORTUNITY FOR BILATERAL TALKS

WITH EPMG. IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR ON JANUARY 10, IRAQI AMBASSADOR -- WHO IS WELL INFORMED ON LOCAL MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS -- DISCOUNTED ANY SDR MILITARY INITIATIVE IN ETHIOPIA AND DESCRIBE SIAD SUPPORT FOR BORDER INSURGENT IN OGADEN AS WHOLLY LACKING IN SUSTAINED LOGISTICAL SUPPORT. HE BELIEVES SIAD AND SDR FULLY COMMITTED TO WAITING OUT EVOLUTION OF EVENTS IN ETHIOPIA.
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